

## OPENING STATEMENT

### REP. BART GORDON

Ranking Member, U.S. House Committee on Science

#### Markup

**H.R. 5656** – *Energy Research, Development, Demonstration, and Commercial Application Act of 2006*

**June 27, 2006**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to consider this important legislation.

Whether we are speaking of our increasing reliance on foreign sources of energy, looming environmental concerns, or the high cost of gas and electricity, Congress should respond with forward-looking, aggressive, and sensible energy legislation.

The bill and manager's amendment before us today contain many important provisions, several from Democratic members, and I thank the Chairman for working with us to include them.

I believe we have crafted provisions that accurately reflect our Members' concerns, while staying true to the intent and scope of the bill.

There are still issues left unresolved at this point, and I hope we can come to an agreement on how to handle them before the bill is considered on the floor.

For example, Mr. Costello has sincere concerns about the way the FutureGen project is authorized in this bill.

And, I personally believe the Committee should be sending a stronger message than the bill contains today about the future of energy research - specifically, the establishment of an Advanced Research Projects Agency for Energy, or ARPA-E.

This follows direct recommendations of the National Academies of Science in the *Gathering Storm* report - which we all applauded - and I believe will be essential to the future of energy in the U.S.

We must begin to re-think and re-energize the way we approach energy R&D and technology development. Just yesterday the *Energy Daily* ran my op-ed calling for an ARPA-E, which I believe has the capacity to aid in major technological advancements, and possibly revolutionize energy as we know it.

Mr. Chairman, with the Senate also including an ARPA-E provision in their competitiveness package, this will not be the last word you hear on ARPA-E and I look forward to future debate in hopes that I might change your mind on this one.

We on the Democratic side look forward to this markup and to working with you to move this legislation through Congress.